PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO

CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM · LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO · PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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Smash capitalist violence

Communist revolution will liberate us!

Fight for mental health clinics now, organize for a communist future

CHICAGO, January, 24– This racist profit system has stolen yet another child, this time the life of eight-year-old Melissa Ortega. She and her mother were walking down the street in the Little Village neighborhood on January 22 when they got caught in a gang-related crossfire. Melissa was struck twice in the head. A system ruled by the biggest gangsters of all time, the bosses, will foster violence against our class.

To amass profits, bosses must force our class to work under dangerous working conditions, and endure equally miserable living conditions, pushing millions of workers into an early grave. These horrific capitalist conditions—social murder and imperialist wars—create the perfect storm for gang violence.

Capitalism is a genocidal system propped up by racist, sexist exploitation, inequality, and war. Violence enables rulers to oppress workers, ruling over us with fear and impunity. ONLY in a society where education, resources, and means of production are all in the name of nurturing and fostering from each according to commitment, to each according to need we will no have conditions that lead to gang violence. The ultimate murderers are the bosses, who must be smashed through communism.

Communists fight back against capitalist terror

Little Village is primarily a Spanish-speaking lower-income working class community. The bosses are trying to gentrify this historically neglected area, with an added effort to rid gangs. The bosses want us to buy into the racist myth of Black-on-Black crime, to convince us that Black and Latin workers are "violent" and "criminal" to justify police terror and mass incarceration.

However, we must not forget it is the capitalists who make wars, and glamorize and sell violent culture. It is the capitalists who attack us with poverty and police terror. It is the capitalists who sell the guns, and who place them in the hands of arms dealers and gang members, degraded workers, killing our class sisters ,brothers, and children in mainly Black and Latin neighborhoods.

The following Monday, a friend of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and a resident of Little Village texted a Party member to attend a press conference called by his organization to demand justice for Melissa. Word was quickly spread; four PLP members and two longtime friends of PL, attended. Everyone was outraged and called on local politicians to demand mental health clinics for their community but predictably none came.

Those of us in the Party have been working in this area for years in various campaigns, workplaces and mass organizations in order to win workers to the necessity of communist revolution to crush this rotten system and all its misery.

No more victims of capitalism!

We distributed 30 copies of CHALLENGE while speaking with many workers present. One woman thought that we'd have a better society if we all had the same religion. Another woman thought that lack of mental health clinics was the problem. Over half of the city's public mental health clinics closed in 2013, under the watch of racist former mayor, Rahm Emanuel. This lack of access definitely plays a part, as many working class youth who are oppressed and alienated are deprived of resources that could help them emotionally and socially.

Melissa's mother, Aracelia Leanos, said in a

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JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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SCAN ME

OUR FIGHT

✰Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✰The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✰Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✰While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✰Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✰Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✰Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✰Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✰Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✰Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

As fascists fight fascists, workers must choose communism

On January 11, the U.S. Justice Department—a lethal weapon for the world's most deadly state terrorists, the U.S. ruling class—announced a new division to target "domestic terrorism." One year after the assault on the Capitol by loyalists of Donald Trump, the vicious battle between two factions of U.S. capitalism is getting even hotter. Controlled by the liberal fascist bosses and their Democratic Party, at least for now, both the Injustice Department and the U.S. Congress have launched sweeping investigations of Trump and his top confederates. These finance capital liberals, also known as the Big Fascists (see glossary, page 6), are taking another step toward full-blown fascism.

To date, more than 700 people have been arrested for their roles in the January 6 rebellion, including 375 for felonies (Washington Post, 1/11). Eleven Trump associates have been charged with crimes (CNN, 7/21/21). The New York Times, the liberal bosses' leading propaganda machine, is making a case to charge Trump himself with a scheme to confiscate voting machines (2/1). This is just the beginning. The Big Fascists' media are calling for new laws to more severely prosecute any and all threats to their agenda (TIME, 1/24).

In the fight between Big Fascists and Small Fascists, our class must be clear-eyed about capitalist democracy. We do not hold state power. Capitalism is a dictatorship against the working class, while communism will mean the dictatorship of the working class. Only then do we get to decide how to run society. Make communist revolution with the international Progressive Labor Party.

Big Fascists, big problems

The Big Fascists, represented by the largest banks and multinational companies like ExxonMobil and Google, are tied to the old liberal world order and expansive U.S. imperialism. To protect their trillions in profits, and to counter rising imperialist gangs in China and Russia, they bankroll 750-plus armed bases around the globe and spend more on the U.S. military than the next 10 nations combined (aljazeera.com, 9/10/21)—a big potential advantage in the next world war.

But unlike China and Russia, the Big Fascists are hobbled by splits in their ranks. The myths of liberal democracy--"free and fair" elections, a government that "plays by the rules"--constrain them. Meanwhile, the Small Fascists, the domestically oriented capitalists fronted by Trump, are free to more openly cheat and steal their way into power while leveraging gutter racism and sexism to mobilize their base. The January 6 insurrection was a warning shot of more to come. To prepare for war and build a united, patriotic, multiracial military, the Big Fascists need to use their legal apparatus to crush the Small Fascists and discipline the whole capitalist class.

If and when they succeed, the liberal rulers will proceed to the second essential element of fascism: an all-out campaign to mislead, pacify, and attack the working class, first by eliminating communists and anyone else not with the program. The Joe Biden administration's offensive against "domestic terrorists," including modern Klansmen like the Oath Keepers, is aimed both to destroy the Big Fascists' enemies and to confuse the working class. As CHALLENGE consistently points out, the liberal bosses are the most virulent racists and our most dangerous class enemies. Why is that? Because they have a greater ability to deceive honest, anti-racist workers, and a far greater--and proven--capacity for mass murder, from Hiroshima to Vietnam to Iraq.

While the liberal rulers still have the loyalty of their generals and more "dark money" than the Trumpers to buy elections (NYT, 1/29), there is no guarantee they will come out on top. After continuing to bungle the bosses' response to Covid-19, Biden is deeply unpopular. Though the Republicans are a minority party, they already control the U.S. Supreme Court and most state legislatures. They appear likely to retake the U.S. Senate (cnn.com, 11/21/21) and the House of Representatives this fall (New York Post, 12/31/21). Trump is a narrow betting favorite to be returned to the White House in 2024 (bonus.com, 2/1).

For the Big Fascist liberals, a Small Fascist sweep would have dire implications for what's left of the old U.S. empire. As president, Trump was soft (to say the least) on Russian President Vladimir Putin. He showed disdain for traditional U.S. allies and is distrusted by liberal bosses in Europe and NATO. As more than a hundred thousand Russian troops have massed on the border with Ukraine, Small Fascist Republicans in Congress are showing no appetite for inter-imperialist confrontation. Said Congressman Matt Rosendale of Montana: "Despite claims by war hawks on both sides of the aisle, it is not in our national interest to spill American blood and treasure in Ukraine" (msn.com, 1/22).

As Russia advances on Ukraine and expands its military influence in Africa (cnbc.com, 9/13/21), and China becomes the ally of choice for bosses in the Middle East (New York Times, 2/2), the Big Fascists may be running out of time.

Liberal democracy = liberal fascism

In the history of class society, going back to the ancient Greeks (the slave-owning forerunners of the U.S. Founding Monsters), democracy has always been a dictatorship of the ruling class. Today's liberal democracy is an absolute dictatorship of the finance capitalist bosses. When the Big Fascists cry that democracy is under threat, it means they are fearful that their control is in jeopardy.

Voting is a con game to foster the illusion that workers decide what happens in society. Little more than a year after Biden was elected as the "compassionate" alternative to Trump, he's committed one anti-worker atrocity after the next: normalizing Covid slaughter, caging children at the border, cheerleading for more funding for killer kkkops.

But that's business as usual under capitalism. What's new is that the liberal rulers--divided, corrupt, getting weaker by the day—are seeing that they can no longer govern in the old way. Though they'd prefer to keep the charade of democracy, they can't allow it to usher their Small Fascist rivals into power. (It's worth noting that Adolph Hitler became Germany's chancellor through democratic elections, though the Nazi Party never polled more than 37 percent of the vote.) The U.S. Justice Department's renewed focus on domestic terrorism is a preliminary move to put the liberals' internal competition out of business—and, sooner than later, to go after other "enemies of the state," including Progressive Labor Party.

We will never liberate the working class from the bondage of capitalism as long as we hold illusions about what we control. Under liberal democracy, the capitalist bosses own our labor and the means of production. The rulers control the institutions of the state: the government, the media, the schools, the military. What we control is our ability to build class unity and consciousness by advancing class struggle. Our Party and our class are fighting back from Haiti to Colombia to Pakistan, from Mexico to East Africa. We're exposing the dead-end identity politics that Black mayors are weaponizing against Black and Latin workers in Los Angeles and Chicago and New York and Newark. Smash the rulers' democracy! Fight for communism! Join PLP!✪

Torrance PD, Rotten to the core!

Torrance, CA, January 30—Workers and Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members refused to stay silent since racist, sexist, homophobic, and anti-Semitic text messages by Torrance police officers, going back to 2018, were revealed to the public. In the spirit of fightback, two mutual aid organizations, which PL members work in, called for a rally at Torrance City Hall. The rally called attention to the racist and sexist history of not just the Torrance Police Department (TPD) but the entire capitalist system that policing upholds. Under capitalism all KKKOPS protect the ruling class and their property and uphold a system that relies on racist super-profits. They routinely criminalize Black, Latin, Asian, and immigrant workers to ensure that our class brothers and sisters remain exploited and fearful. Only with communist revolution will workers have the power to weed out capitalism, the root of all crime and oppression, and smash racist police once and for all.

A history of racism in the Torrance PD

This whole texting scandal came to light when the department started investigating former officers Cody Weldon and Christopher Tomsic, who spray painted a swastika on a car impounded in a mail fraud investigation. So far 13 officers have been named by the Los Angeles District Attorney's office as being active in the text exchanges, including Anthony Chavez and Matthew Concannon, who murdered a Black man, Christopher De'Andre Mitchell, in 2018. No one has been charged but thus far 85 criminal cases these officers were involved in have been dismissed (LA Times, 12/08/21).

These disgusting text messages show the contempt cops hold for the working-class communities they patrol. This isn't a case of a few bad apples but a system that is rotten to the core.

Racism means: we have to fight back!

About 30 people showed up for the rally, which had a loose plan for chants and speeches. Select reform demands included firing all officers involved in the text messages, creating a civilian oversight commission; and, ultimately, abolition of the police. While we understand these measures won't solve the crisis for the working-class, making these demands helps our class instill confidence in each other, our fellow comrades, and sharpens our consistent struggle and fightback.

A PL member led most of the chanting and encouraged people to speak on the bullhorn. The PLer gave a brief speech about the history of police and argued that to ultimately get rid of racist policing we need to organize to overthrow capitalism. Participants responded enthusiastically and some said later that this was the first action they had attended and they were eager to participate in the future.

The mass groups who organized the action mainly focus on direct mutual aid but also see homelessness, poverty, and police harassment as tied to this oppressive, capitalist system. Party members must be bolder in pushing for our revolutionary line as we build community support and fight side by side for reforms.

Eventually our class will see a communist revolution, but we can only do that by building an international working-class party. Join PLP and worker by worker, we will smash this racist system!✪

Comrades in Mexico applies dialectical materialism to transform reality

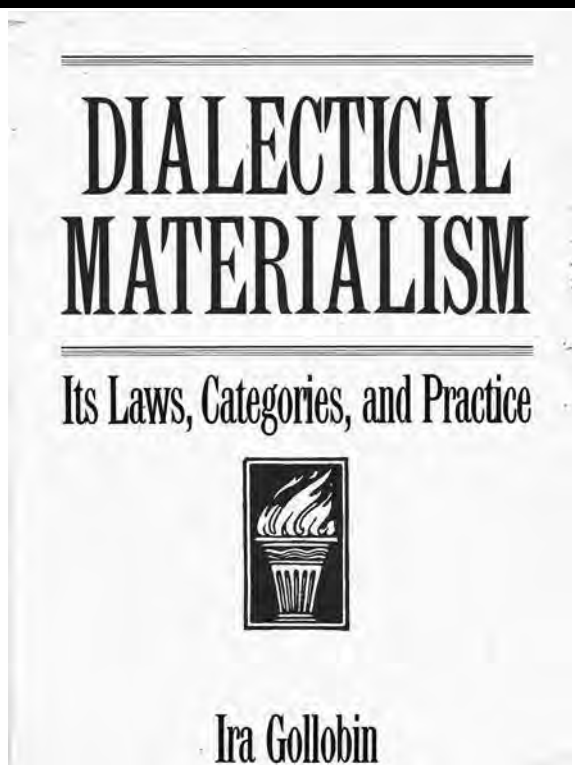
The Progressive Labor Party (PLP) collective in Mexico participated in a forum on dialectical materialism organized by teachers from the National Coordinator of Education Workers, as part of their pedagogical, philosophical, and political training. About 60 secondary school teachers and workers from other areas participated.

At the beginning of the meeting we thanked the attendees for their presence. We introduced ourselves as an international communist party made up of workers from all over the world that has always joined in the resistance of teachers against the bosses' attacks. We reported on the struggles the party has participated in and organized in Mexico, such as the strikes at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), at a car factory, and in neighborhoods in the Valley of Mexico.

Smash capitalist ideology with worker's science

Two comrades from the Party presented the laws and categories of dialectical materialism - a philosophy that equips us to make sense of the world and the reality in which we live in order to transform it. We criticized the superficial and pro-capitalist ideology pushed by the media, the universities, and all the think-tanks of the capitalist system. One teacher asked if UNAM was on that list. We responded that many of the leading cadres of the recent governments all trained at UNAM! We also argued that a distinction should be made between the students, professors, and workers who fight against the bureaucracy and the academic elite who control that bureaucracy and serve the interests of the capitalist class.

To explain the categories of appearance and essence, we explained that the current liberal government of Morena, in appearance, is pro-working class but in essence, like all governments under the capitalist system, serves the interests of the ruling-class. As an example, we explained that social programs have been used to infiltrate communities, weaken their organization, and co-opt leaders to



Revolutionary philosophy for the working class

weaken resistance to President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's mega-projects: the Mayan train, the Dos Bocas refinery, and the Interoceanic Corridor that all represent the interests of local capitalists and imperialists, mainly from China and the United States.

A colleague asked how these categories could be applied to the teaching process which sparked a very important discussion. Teachers noticed that in appearance, students are trained so that they can complete a degree and find a "decent" job. But in essence few students "succeed," making the educational system a failure for the working-class and beholden to the needs of the capitalist system. Teachers also questioned the current situation of the union. They pointed out that in appearance it is very combative and defends the interests of its members, but in essence it is paralyzed and does not fight.

When we talked about similarity and difference, we referenced how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the working-class much more than the capitalist class. Although we are biologically and physiologically similar, our social and life conditions are very different. Our class could not stop working, particularly those of us who work in factories or in service industries. When we got sick, we did not have access to timely and quality medical services.

Resolve capitalist contradictions with communist revolution

Then we reviewed the laws of dialectics. We talked about the contradictions present in natural and social processes. Though the main contradiction of capitalism exists between bosses and workers, currently what determines things in the world is the contradiction between the imperialists. We explained that contradictions are only resolved by intensifying them.

When we spoke of the negation of the negation, we described how capitalism had negated the previous social system, feudalism, and that communism would negate capitalism. Each historical change moved us towards a higher stage.

At the end we distributed our newspaper, CHALLENGE and invited teachers to join a PL study circle. Two teachers mentioned that the forum had helped them to understand many of the processes that took place in their communities, such as the appropriation of common land at the hands of private companies or the unhealthy quality of processed food made attractive by marketing. Participation in the forum motivated our collective and that night we made new plans to continue the dialectical process of building a new society – a communist society.✪

Covid-19 under capitalism will continue to spread

Covid-19 under capitalism will continue to spread. The world is now approaching the mark of two full years of the Covid-19 pandemic. The thirst for profit and the competition between different capitalist factions and countries has left large segments of the world population susceptible to the coronavirus infection. Many hundreds of millions of unvaccinated people, and now with the Omicron variant millions of vaccinated people, too, are getting Covid-19.

This unchecked spread of the virus is deadly for our class-the working class. As long as it can continue to infect people, variants will arise. We have to look out for our class by keeping each other safe. The bosses of the ruling class are preaching individualism and encouraging us to engage in activities they know will spread the virus and likely lead to more variants. As workers, we can socialize and meet and march in ways that still guard against the spread of the coronavirus and its variants. We can fight for the safest conditions possible where we work or go to school and we can build a movement led by the working-class to fight to get rid of this system once and for all with communist revolution.

Capitalism spreads the virus

These variants are a result of multiplication of billions of viruses with subsequent mutations in RNA as these viruses replicate. Every time the virus infects a new person it makes billions of copies of itself. We should not be surprised to see wave after wave of variants as long as the SARS-CoV-2 virus has room to multiply. This happens because as a virus multiplies, changes in the viral RNA occur spontaneously. If some of these variants become more contagious, they become dominant and may be able to evade the immunity induced by vaccines.

"Mutations occur when viruses are in an immunocompromised host and when they can infect many people. In the first case, the immunocompromised person's immune system is unable to rid the body of the virus, or to do so quickly. That gives the virus more time to infect more cells and produce more copies of itself, potentially producing more mutations. It is similar when many people in a population are infected. The virus may have less time in a single host before the immune system reacts but has more opportunities to mutate in more bodies….Mutations could also bestow the ability to become more transmissible, making it easier for the virus to infect others, or more severe, meaning it's more likely those infected will require hospital care or die" (Global News, 4/28/21).

The current situation is a textbook case of a variant generator, "the chance a vaccine-resistant strain will emerge is highest in a scenario that combines three conditions: First, a large portion of a population is vaccinated, but not everyone. Second, there's a lot of virus circulating. And third, no measures are in place to curb potential viral transmission from vaccinated people" (Business Insider, 8/1/21).

The bosses know; they don't care

The ruling-class knows the dangers of the activities they continue to promote. "The threat of Covid-19 means you should avoid eating and drinking in public if you can. More interactions between potentially infected people will give the virus more pathways to spread and potentially mutate" (WSJ, 1/17).

As long as the ruling-class is in power they will put their needs for profit and desire to keep themselves in power over the needs of the working-class and the suffering will continue. As workers, we have to look out for each other and fight to make the needs of our class primary. ✪

Israel-Palestine:

Zionism leaves fighters injured over racist borders

BURIN, WEST BANK, PALESTINE, January 21– A group of 30 Jewish fighters, mostly over the age of 70, as well as two members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP), showed antiracist solidarity with the Palestenian working class in the village of Burin. They helped plant new olive trees where old ones have been uprooted.

Immediately, a group of settlers, armed with clubs and a firebomb, attacked, all in the name of zionism. All forms of nationalism is a deadend ideaology for our class; we need Jewish-Muslim unity against racism.

The small Palestinian village of Burin, near Nablus, for several years has suffered many attacks by settlers from the nearby highly illegal Israeli far-right settlement, "Givat Ronen." - The settlers brutalize the locals and destroy their property and livelihood, including uprooting olive trees - a major crop raised by the Burin's hard-working residents.

The Israeli military, ever-present in the West Bank, never protects the villagers - but quickly protects the settlers if the villagers try to defend themselves.

This type of nationalist racism is not new to the international working class. Just as we see across capitalist borders around the world, bosses will claim rights to land in the name of profit even if it means turning a blind eye to this robbery or executing our class sisters and brothers. Only with communism, when we smash nations and borders will we be free of racist violence and murder.

Israel STILL guilty of racism

The entire event was recorded on video and was quickly on the news. While in racist Israel, attacks on Palestinian villagers usually go unnoticed, an attack on elderly Israeli peace activists does enter the news.

This caused a major political uproar in Israel, as even many Israeli liberals felt anger over the cowardly and savage attack. Many called on the government to remove the illegal "Givat Ronen" settlement, which overlooks Burin, and to arrest the settler thugs. Nothing has been done so far.

The Israeli police force, which has recently been exposed for spying on political dissidents, and regularly spies on Palestinians, could have easily located and arrested the fascist thugs. However, apart from an online outcry (rather than actions) from certain politicians, Israel's liberal "Government of Change" has done nothing to deal with these criminals and their - once again - highly illegal settlement.

Liberals and cops will never defeat fascists, as liberalism and fascism are two sides of the same rotten coin, and as cops often are fascists themselves or at minimum complicit in protecting fascist controls. The only way forward is revolution by building an international communist party – PLP!

A good starting point would be to invite younger antiracists to political events, to train against fascist pogroms.

In the long run, we must build a revolutionary movement to smash capitalism and fascism with the only alternative: communism.✪

Memorializing Melissa

Fight back against gangster capitalism

Continued from page 1

statement that the shooter was a victim of the system himself and forgave him, knowing that he will have to live with her daughter's murder for the rest of his life. But the fact is that we are all victims of capitalism with its racist and sexist culture of individualism, unemployment, underemployment, rotten schools and medical care.

And yes, the shooter, 16-year old Emilio Corripio and his 27-year-old accomplice, are victims of capitalism. But we still have a choice: become communists and join PLP in building a communist movement where we turn the guns around on the bosses to get rid of this rotten system of capitalism. We have to intensify our efforts to win our class to the Party or we run the risk of more workers joining the reformist dead-end of capitalist politics and becoming politicians for the super-rich capitalists, turning to religion, racist cynicism, or even joining the predatory street gangs.

The list of casualties keeps getting longer. Under capitalism, "justice" looks like killer cops like Jason Van Dyke serving a six year sentence then being set free for "good behavior" after shooting Black teenager LaQuan McDonald 16 times. Kyle Rittenhouse being declared 'innocent' by the U.S. court system after killing two antiracists in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Which side are we on?

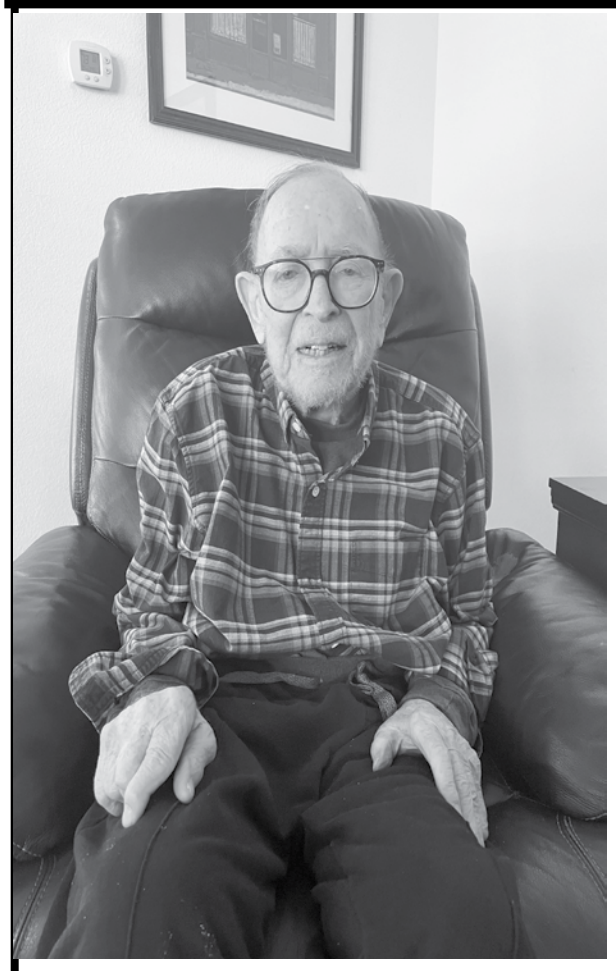
Choose the working class

Be they the cops and sheriffs, the "legal" foot soldiers for the capitalist class who killed working-class youth like Adam Toledo in the streets of Chicago or Valentina Orellana Peralta and Daniel Elena Lopez in Los Angeles. Or whether they are the petty capitalist-influenced gangs, we have to ask ourselves which side are we on—the capitalists or the international working class?

If you choose the international working class, join PLP and continue to build the international communist movement to achieve a better world—a communist world where we take care of each other and help each other reach our human potential. It is our responsibility as communists to win our young friends in Little Village and everywhere to join PLP and fight for a just future.✪

Remembering Larry Cutler:

When competition gave way to communism



Long-time Progressive Labor Party (PLP) member Larry Cutler died on January 6, 2022 at the age of 89. He was a welfare worker who joined PLP inspired by his experiences in the 1967 New York City welfare workers strike. He helped build multiracial unity between welfare workers and welfare recipients at the Bushwick welfare office.

He understood that only communism could bring workers together worldwide to build an egalitarian world without racism or sexism. To that end he invited many workers to PLP activities and distributed CHALLENGE to many more.

A terrific baseball player

Larry was a terrific baseball player. He excelled at Taft High School in the Bronx and later at City College. After graduating from college, Larry played professionally for the Chicago White Sox and Pittsburgh Pirate minor league teams. In sports he was extremely competitive. An all-star in the minors, he was enshrined in the City College of New York sports hall of fame. He continued playing ball until he was in his early 40s. He was the second baseman for our office softball team. He was an all-star in the welfare workers' league. When Larry retired years later, a player from another office spoke at the retirement party saying in part he had never seen anyone turn a double play like Larry.

A terrific communist organizer

Larry brought his same fire and energy to his activities in PLP. When the Party asked all of us to sell more copies of CHALLENGE, Larry was among those who sold the most. When we were asked to produce "shop" papers, he had one ready almost every week. He did this by having a daily plan of where and when he would sell the paper and how to get the shop paper done.

Larry brought scores of workers to Party events—May Day Marches, Workers Action Movement and International Committee Against Racism meetings and other gatherings. He believed in building a mass party and that meant inviting many workers to participate in a variety of Party activities. After he retired, Larry placed our Party newspaper, CHALLENGE, on newsstands, in bodegas, laundromats etc, all around NYC. He carried out these plans to the best of his ability.

He is survived by his wife Darlene, sons Davey and Tony, his grandchildren and ex-wife Gloria. He is remembered by countless coworkers, friends, and comrades.

Larry had both the strengths and weaknesses we all have. He had the desire to do what was needed to build the Progressive Labor Party. We say that it's what you do that counts; on that score, Larry did a lot.✪.

Show some love for Progressive Labor Party by donating. Scan the QR code or go to www.tinyurl.com/donate2plp. Follow us on social media! @PLPchallenge.

Book review

Under capitalism, science is turned into a microcosm of inequity

In the very readable T*he Disordered Cosmos, A Journey into Dark Matter, Spacetime, and Dreams Deferred* (2021), author Chanda Prescod-Weinstein gives a wonderful introduction to the great questions of how the universe works. How does time work? Why are there so many different quarks that make up matter? What can dark matter be that prevents spiral galaxies from collapsing on themselves?

The book is an even greater history and analysis on the insidious effects that racism and sexism have on science under capitalism. The author's mother is from the Caribbean, her father Jewish, and the author grew up in East Los Angeles. Following education at Harvard, she faced teachers and students along the way who openly declared her mentally incapable of majoring in particle physics. In a field dominated by white men from bourgeois and petty bourgeois backgrounds, Chanda, a non-white working-class woman, was told she could never be equal - a dismissal so many workers face under a capitalist education system that deems intellect as solely for a select few. Under communism, education will be rid of its elitist chains and knowledge will come from and be for the working-class.

Science is political

Physics is not "pure science" untouched by capitalism, but an embodiment of the individualist, racist and sexist social relations of capitalism. Under capitalism, the field of physics itself has long been stripped of its halo and ceased asking "the big questions" about the nature of the universe that Chanda honors with reverent awe. Under capitalism, physicists are reduced to wage-laborers of military research, developing ever more lethal weapons like drones and hyper-sonic missiles to massacre other workers in looming imperialist wars for profit. Irrespective of an individual scientist's intentions, the sciences today serve only the imperialist system that the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP) is organizing internationally to smash.

Chanda is relentless in exposing the racist and sexist practices that have rippled through the history of scientific discovery. She constantly exposes the rapacious capitalist imperialist system that has rav-

Continued on page 7

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

Wherever you live, work, or attend school, organize for communsim artwork by: @tabithakarol

Popular culture not Poitier propagated capitalist ideals

A few thoughts on the excellent Sidney Poitier piece in CHALLENGE.

This is a wonderful analysis of how popular culture is used to propagate the ideas that the ruling class wants us to absorb. Using the characters that Poitier played throughout his career helps to highlight this point in a very clear way.

I do think after reading this piece again that while the author of the piece makes clear that Poitier's "offscreen life…hardly conformed to the pacifist image he projected in his most popular films," the headline, at least in my reading, gives the impression that Poitier personally agrees with the ruling class' goals.

I think it is important to distinguish between the character and the actor. Again, in my view, the headline might have sounded better were it to say "Sidney Poitier's film character, no hero for antiracist fightback."

I am not so sure that Paul Robeson would have objected strongly to Poitier's characters given his own history in films.

★★★★★

Wally passed the torch, comrades keep flame of communism burning bright

In the February 2 article on our beloved comrade, Wally Linder, CHALLENGE called him "the last surviving founder of the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP)." Wally's huge contribution to our organization and the international communist movement is indisputable. But in point of fact, he was one of a handful of founders of the Progressive Labor Movement in 1962. Three years later, PL organized its first convention to become a full-fledged party, with communist centralism and a formal political line. By that point, its founding circle had expanded to include numerous other comrades, many of whom are still with us today.

★★★★★

GLOSSARY

COMMUNIST TERMS

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

2022 MLA Convention: Communism or barbaric capitalism

More than 50 years after it was formed in the era of the Vietnam War, the Radical Caucus (RC) of the Modern Language Association (MLA) is alive and kicking as new U.S. imperialist wars begin to boil against Russia and China. Progressive Labor Party (PLP) has been a leading force in the RC since the 1980s, our presence showing the importance of a long-term approach to work in a mass organization. At the January 2022 (mostly online) MLA Convention, once again PL brought to the MLA Radical Caucus both the "hard line" of revolutionary communism and the "flexible tactics" of building a communist base among liberal professors.

"Keywords" for communist struggle

PL'ers and friends played important roles in many sessions, analyzing how capitalism shapes the conditions under which teachers of literature think and work. In a session honoring Richard Ohmann, a staunch Marxist who helped found the RC, we emphasized how his work as a scholar and organizer made him part of the "red line of history." In a session on "Antiracism and the Future of the Profession," a PLP member urged the teaching of literary texts and contexts that open up "the communist horizon.

The "New Keywords for Our Struggle '' session featured a PL'er who critically and terminally diagnosed the term "white privilege" as capitalist propaganda antithetical to antiracism. Invoking the revolutionary class-conscious poetry of Langston Hughes, the PL'er concluded that only communist revolution can end "systemic racism." Another panelist analyzed "solidarity" as a continuing goal of multiracial fightback rather than a taken-for-granted liberal value.

Communist politics spreading, tactics evolving

In the session "The Languages of War, Genocide and Climate Collapse" several PLP comrades urged from the panel and the floor that we see these urgent fights as "communism or barbarism." Our friends who spoke there were also fired up with that urgency, and we are following up with them about joining the Party as the concrete expression of their anticapitalist politics. Two professors we'd never met before asked to know more about PLP's political line (analysis) and history.

In the past, the RC concentrated mainly on bringing antiracist, antisexist, and pro-working class resolutions before the Delegate Assembly. New developments have changed our tactics. Covid-era restrictions on group gatherings; reactionary changes in the MLA Constitution making it near-impossible to raise and pass political resolutions; the proletarianization of faculty; the resurgence of anti-capitalist activism among young people—these changes have led the RC to broaden its focus.

Younger faculty and adjuncts step forward!

The highly spirited RC meeting at the end of the convention, attended by 33 people, developed this altered approach to organizing all year rather than only at the annual convention. The RC Steering Committee has been expanded to include younger teachers, mostly adjuncts. Inspired by a young elementary school teacher who spoke about the need for the RC to be "really radical," we discussed an agenda for 2022 to move us from thought into action. This will involve bringing faculty into students'and workers' struggles; unionization among academic and nonacademic campusworkers; benefits for adjunct faculty; more study groups interrogating the"keywords" of current social justice movements; involvement in campaigns tomake the bosses pay for Covid-19 safeguards; the urgency of attacking climatecollapse and sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry.

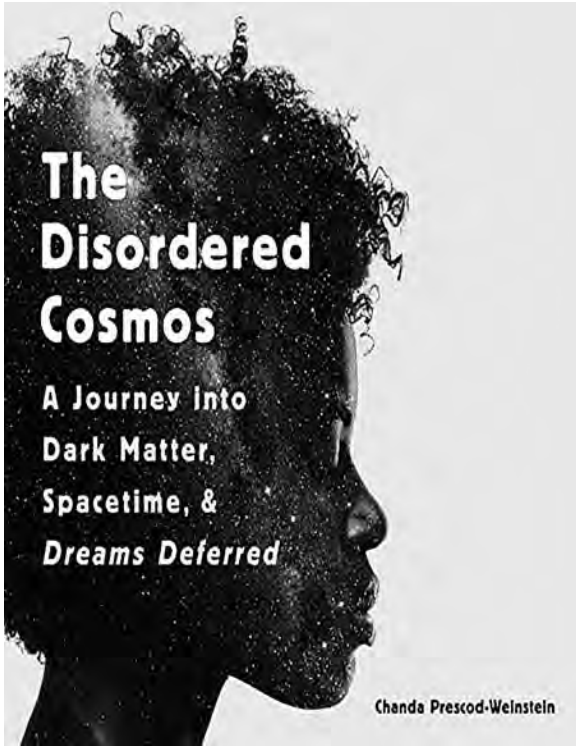
The challenge facing communists in the RC is to bring to these reform-level struggles over theory and practice an understanding of the need to join a communist party and fight to abolish capitalism. A world without borders; without racist and sexist hierarchies; without toxic individualism and alienation. While some literary works contain glimpses of this better world, it is our writing, teaching and organizing task in the MLA to bring literary people into the Party, PLP, which can make it a reality.

Science is political, political struggle is scientific

Continued from page 5

aged the lives of workers, especially Black, Latin, and women workers, all over the world. She makes several sharp points like: "If Black people are invisible, how come the police are so good at shooting our friends and family…The starting point might be to avoid looking at the differences between people, and instead focus on the system that implies extreme differences."

Chanda punctuates her analyses with her love and thirst for studying the wonders of the universe. And it is amazing and dazzling! The observable universe has no center! Space and time are inseparable from one another, and "spacetime" itself is curved! However, the joy of these advances is lessened by how many workers are shut out from learning about the world. "We lose people because too often there aren't enough victories and moments of joy and fun for those of us who are from communities that history kicked to the cotton fields, trails of tears, unsafe street corners, prisons, and death at the hands of state actors and vigilantes. It is hard to see the wonders of the universe through the social crud."



Political struggle is scientific

Chanda correctly blames the structural racism within capitalism for the poverty that oppresses so many Black people, refugees, single mothers, children and trans workers. Chanda states we should be able "to see the night sky and be inspired by the universe as it really is. It should be a human right, not a luxury for the chosen few." She also writes, "People need to know that we live in a universe that is bigger than the bad things that are happening to us."

Chanda says in her professional life she is afraid of what would happen if she really spoke her mind. That is why we need a Party like PLP, that unites the working-class. You cannot beat the bosses individually. *The Disordered Cosmos* lucidly attacks the capitalist system all the way through, so it was a disappointment to see on the last page her call for "peace" three times in the last paragraph as her final stand.

Workers need to study and apply the science of dialectical materialism, so we can free ourselves from the shackles of racist, sexist capitalism

Chanda, and all workers, must subscribe to CHALLENGE and organize our efforts scientifically using dialectical materialism (see page 3) to demolish capitalism and set up a communist system in which everyone can strive to reach their full potential. The *Disordered Cosmos* is a good introduction for workers to the "big questions" of both political struggle and the nature of the universe itself, and a rich text for Party study groups on dialectical materialism.✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Imperialist fight over Africa continues

The Economist, 1/29– In Burkina Faso the first sign was gunfire echoing from army bases in Ouagadougou, the capital, on January 23rd. The government had been dissolved and the constitution suspended …. The president, Roch Kaboré, has not been seen and is thought to be under arrest. In his place came a new strongman, Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba, an infantry officer … France has deployed about 5,100 soldiers … along the southern edge of the Sahara. The French troops are backed by commandos from America and from other European countries. The UN has a force of about 15,000 peacekeepers in Burkina Faso's neighbour, Mali, … All of these foreign soldiers are battling alongside local forces to hold back insurgents loosely affiliated with al-Qaeda and Islamic State. In Burkina Faso more than 1.5m people out of a population of 21m have been forced to flee their homes in the past three years.

Inter-imperialist rivalry destroys Syria

Brookings, 1/27–Ten years after the start of the Syrian war, the toll in death, destruction, and human misery is hard to acknowledge. The war is dragging on and the country remains divided… The U.N., in 2021,documented over 350,200 deaths, calling it "an under-count of the actual number of killings" since the tally followed strict guidelines requiring the deceased's full name, date of death, and location. Another tragic tally: Over half of Syria's prewar population has been forcibly displaced, with over 6.8 million refugees and some 6.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Most of the refugees are in neighboring Jordan (670,000), Lebanon (844,000), and Turkey (3.65 million). Turkey remains the world's largest hosting country (over 4 million …but, on a per capita basis, Lebanon and Jordan are first and second globally.

U.S. considers options as rivals challenge

Foreign Affairs, 1/18–The United States is an overstretched hegemon, with a defense strategy that has come out of balance with the foreign policy it supports. China has accelerated its efforts to overturn the balance of power in Asia. Biden ended the U.S. war in Afghanistan, a decision he justified by arguing that it was time to refocus attention and resources on the Indo-Pacific. Relations with U.S. allies followed the same pattern: the administration dropped U.S. opposition to the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline linking Russia and western Europe, wagering that ending a contentious dispute with Germany would make it easier to win Berlin's cooperation vis-à-vis Beijing. The Trump administration made a major shift in U.S. defense planning, arguing that the Pentagon must relentlessly prepare for a conflict against a great-power challenge—particularly from China ... Biden's Pentagon likewise spent 2021 focusing on how to deter or defeat Chinese aggression, withdrawing scarce assets such as missile defense batteries from the Middle East, and making longer-term budgetary investments meant to "prioritize China and its military modernization as our pacing challenge."

Gov't vs. organized crime - we see no difference!

Los Angeles Times, 1/25–Journalists across Mexico took to the streets Tuesday to condemn the killings of colleagues and demand that authorities do more to protect news gatherers in one of the world's most dangerous countries for the press. Protesters in more than three dozen Mexican cities hoisted images of slain journalists and chanted, "You are not alone!" ... "Triggering the denunciations were the slayings of two journalists within a week this month in the northern border city of Tijuana, long a bastion of organized crime, corruption and violence against the press.

Since the year 2000, the press advocacy group Article 19 has documented the killings of 148 Mexican journalists whose slayings may have been related to their work. Many of the victims covered crime and the links between gangs and corrupt police or lawmakers. More than 95% of crimes against journalists in Mexico go unpunished, according to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists.

From the CHALLENGE archives:

Claudia Jones, a revolutionary Black communist

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons.

The next deadline is the **Friday evening of February 11.** Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See box on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

This article is a republication and originally appeared in CHALLENGE in February 2020. The lessons here are worth reprinting, revisiting, relearning every year.

It was out of my Jim Crow experiences as a young Negro woman, experiences likewise born of working-class poverty that led me to join the Young Communist League and to choose the philosophy of my life, the science of Marxism-Leninism—that philosophy that not only rejects racist ideas, but is the antithesis of them. - Claudia Jones

One of the biggest lies the capitalists have ever tried to teach generations of working-class people is that Black workers did not play a critical role in communist history. This is because the bosses will ALWAYS try to perpetuate the idea that workers should remain divided by race. However, we in Progressive Labor Party (PLP) know that multiracial unity has ALWAYS been the most effective way for workers to overcome the effects of racial exploitation and oppression. Claudia Jones, a Black female leading member of the Communist Party (CP) for decades, represents the heroic efforts in fighting racism and sexism from the 1930s to 1960s, just as her politics also point toward the weaknesses embedded in the strategy of international communism many years ago. The main weakness in the old communist movement that is evident through looking at Claudia Jones is that they did not understand the need for one international party LED by women and Black and Latin workers to unite and fight directly to overthrow capitalism and establish a communist workers' state.

Formation as a communist

Like thousands of other workers in the early 1900s, Jones and her family emigrated to New York City from Trinidad in the Caribbean. Jones was an avid student and started writing early on. She had dreams of college, but as a daughter of a garment worker who died too young, she started working herself at a young age. The revolutionary vision and struggle of the communist movement appealed to her, and in 1936 she joined the Young Communist League and became active in the movement to defend the Scottsboro 9, a group of Black teenagers, who were falsely accused of raping two white women in Alabama.

A multiracial, communist-led movement turned the "Scottsboro Boys" into an international cause for millions of workers all over the world to win their freedom. But just as the communist movement was at its sharpest point of winning workers around the world to workers' revolution, they began to retreat politically into a "popular front against fascism" and Claudia Jones became part of that larger retreat.

Leadership in the Communist Party USA & fascist McCarthyism

In 1937, Jones joined the editorial staff of the communist Daily Worker, rising by 1938 to become editor of the Weekly Review. After World War II, Jones became executive secretary of the Women's National Commission, and secretary for the Women's Commission of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA). In 1953, she took over the editorship of Negro Affairs, a CPUSA journal. However, if anti-racism and internationalism had been the central premise of the CP's strategy, they would not have had the need for a separate journal to address "Negro Affairs," because all affairs of the working-class are touched by racist capitalism and super-exploitation.

Despite the shortcomings of the party's line, Jones organized women workers and gave leadership within the Communist Party USA on the ways super-exploitation of women could become central to the Party's theoretical development. She is perhaps best known for her seminal essay appearing in Political Affairs, "An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman!" in which she took to task liberals, progressives and her own Party for not sufficiently recognizing the super-exploitation of Black women under capitalism and their leadership in working-class struggles, writing:

The bourgeoisie is fearful of the militancy of the Negro woman, and for good reason. The capitalists know, far better than many progressives seem to know, that once Negro women begin to take action, the militancy of the whole Negro people, and thus of the anti-imperialist coalition, is greatly enhanced.... Viewed in this light, it is not accidental that the American bourgeoisie has intensified its oppression, not only of the Negro people in general, but of Negro women in particular. Nothing so exposes the drive to fascization in the nation as the callous attitude which the bourgeoisie displays and cultivates toward Negro women.

In 1948, Jones, along with several other leaders of the Communist Party USA, was charged for conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government. Over the next seven years, the federal government convicted, imprisoned in Ellis Island, and ultimately deported Jones—but not without an international movement launched to free her and thousands of other communist and progressive working-class organizers imprisoned during the fascism of the McCarthy period.

Fighting British racism & imperialism

Following WWII, Caribbean immigration to the United Kingdom increased and Black and Asian immigrant workers faced brutal racism upon arrival. Signs reading "No Irish, No Coloured, No Dogs" littered the streets of London businesses and apartment buildings for rent. Attacks on Black youth by white mobs and police officers were common. Working in London in the 1950's and 60's, Jones, a lifelong communist and self-described Marxist-Leninist, tirelessly organized several anti-racist, anti-imperialist campaigns.

Realizing the importance of celebrating working-class culture, Jones founded the West Indian Gazette, a popular newspaper that built a base among Caribbean diaspora workers in Britain and back home, with a circulation of 15,000. In 1958, following the killings of Black youths and riots instigated by racist white mobs in the Notting Hill neighborhood of London, Jones and others organized a carnival in response to the violence as a means of unifying the Black Caribbean community.

Claudia Jones died in December 1964, her health gutted by the years of political persecution and incarceration in the U.S. Her legacy was immediately felt by working-class communities around the world and condolences poured in, from W.E.B. DuBois, Paul Robeson and Amy Ashwood Garvey to Mao Zedong, whom Jones had met on a delegation to China. Claudia Jones remains an example of how the leadership of Black workers, especially Black women, is key to the future of building a communist society. Paul Robeson expressed his admiration for Jones thusly:

It was a great privilege to have known Claudia Jones. She was a vigorous and courageous leader of the Communist Party of the United States, and was very active in the work for the unity of white and coloured peoples and for dignity and equality, especially for the Negro people and for women.

It is fitting that Jones is buried next to Karl Marx in Highgate Cemetery in London. Following her deportation, Jones wrote:

I was deported from the USA because as a Negro woman communist of West Indian descent, I was a thorn in their side in my opposition to Jim Crow racist discrimination against 16 million Negro Americans in the United States, in my work for redress of these grievances, for unity of Negro and white workers, for women's rights...

As communists we should all be that thorn in the side of capitalism—so sharp as to make it bleed.✪

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